

palestine perspectives

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Israeli-Fascist Designs in Lebanon

Israeli ambitions in Lebanon did not begin with Israel's comparatively recent alliance with the country's fascist forces ("the Christian right") in the south of Lebanon, where the Israeli army is in *de facto* military occupation of the region. The provocation by the fascist militia in Zahleh, in the first week of April, are but part of a broad design for Lebanon mapped out by Israel as far back as 1968, a year after the re-emergence of the Palestinian liberation movement.

Beginning with sea, land and air strikes against the country that year, the Israelis aimed at depopulating and devastating the southern regions of Lebanon, hoping by their action to turn the Lebanese people against the Palestinians, both as a people and a movement, thus destroying them as a nascent force seeking recognition of their national rights.

This policy, like every other policy that the Zionist regime has adopted since, backfired. Instead of turning against them, the Lebanese forged a common struggle with the Palestinians, transforming over the years into a veritable politico-military alliance between the P.L.O. and the Lebanese National Movement.

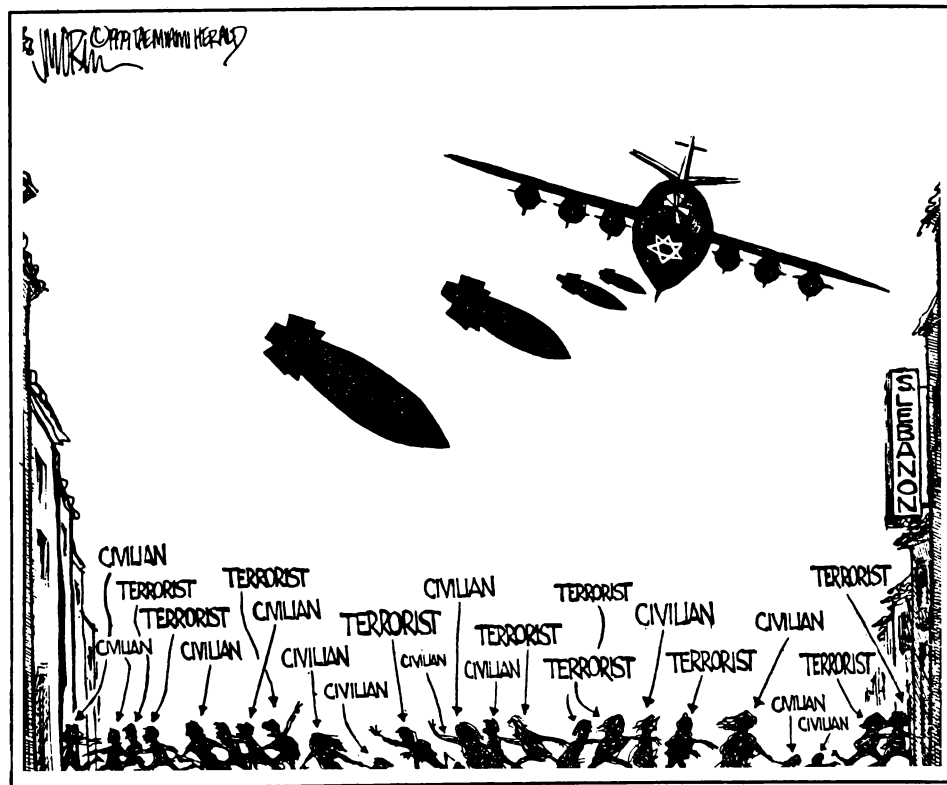
For some five years, Lebanon continued to suffer constant humiliation, not to mention physical destruction, by Israel, which then was striking daily with complete impunity.

Still the alliance held.

With clear signs that its grim ambitions for Lebanon had failed, Israel then turned to the fascist forces in the country (a motley group of extreme right wing elements that sought to protect an inequitable *status quo* favoring their system of privilege) who began to get arms and training by it, and to be encouraged to challenge the Palestinians openly and violently. This in turn, the argument went by Israel, would feed the flames of partition, resulting in the emergence of an all pure Maronite-fascist enclave subservient to the Zionist entity.

With Lebanese society already chafing under extreme dichotomies between the few rich and the many poor, this external load caused a serious breakdown of civil order.

As if to show that the Lebanon conflict, which boiled over in 1975, was indeed not a Moslem-Christian confrontation but on the one hand an Israeli-initiated war to destroy the Palestinians, and on the other a struggle for hegemony between the haves and the have-nots, the first major attack the fascist militias mounted was against the Palestinian



refugee camp of Dubaïh, inhabited totally by Christians.

When the Israelis failed, yet again, to implement their policy of either destroying the Palestinians or promoting a Maronite enclave, they invaded in force in March 1978 in a total war aimed at eliminating the presence of the Palestinian guerrilla presence. One third of the Israeli army, backed by the air force and the navy, was involved. It was defeated — as it had been in every other confrontation with the *fedayeen* since the battle of Karameh ten years before. Israel accepted a ceasefire and withdrew from Lebanon; but not before it handed over the areas it controlled (and that it was to allow the UN forces entry into) to the militias of a Lebanese renegade army officer, one Saad Haddad, loyal to the fascist forces in the north. These militias, trained and armed by the Israelis, remained at the beck and call of Israel, doing its dirty work of bombing and strafing civilian centers in the north.

Still the Palestinian guerrilla movement, and the politico-social structure of the P.L.O., remained intact, cemented even further in their growing alliance with the Lebanese National Movement.

In recent weeks, a new twist was added to the broad design of Israel's policies in

Lebanon. A major supply route was created, along the Bekaa valley, linking the fascist forces in the north, around Zahleh, to the Israeli controlled fascist forces of Saad Haddad in the south, in order that a confrontation with the Arab Deterrent Force could be initiated. The Zahleh battles were that confrontation. The fascist-Israeli aim was two-fold: To "internationalize" the situation in Lebanon and/or to trigger the emergence of conditions for its partition. With the former, the fascists, along with their Israeli allies, sought the entry of some kind of international "peacekeeping" unit into the country that would immobilize the Palestinians and the Lebanese National Movement; and with the latter, they sought the ultimate creation of this long hoped-for mini-fascist state, supportive of Israel, stretched along the Bekaa valley — that is, all along the Syrian border.

For now, through its sustained military action, the ADF has thwarted these fascist-Israeli aims, and the alliance between the P.L.O. and the L.N.M. has come out of this latest sinister confrontation with greater resolve to stand up to Israel.

How many more wars will the Israeli entity lose before it realizes it can not defeat a people engaged in struggle for freedom?

American Professor: "Hello PLO!"

By Michael Prosser

In December 1980-January 1981, a group of 26 American professors visited Lebanon and occupied Palestine. They participated in a seminar for members of the Model United Nations Faculty Association, sponsored by the PLO. In Lebanon, the group also visited PLO institutions, refugee camps and the south. The following are reflections on the visit by Michael Prosser, Professor of Speech Communication at the University of Virginia. They are excerpted from an article which appeared in the February 26 edition of The Declaration, the Univ. of Virginia weekly student magazine.

The diversity of our faculty group in flight to Amman, Jordan, seemed considerable. Many small colleges were represented, including fundamentalist Christian colleges. One faculty member commented that he had received a long distance call from someone in NYC whom he had never heard of blasting the trip and its lack of objectivity because it was sponsored by the PLO. Details of the seminar had been provided to the U.S. State Department, which in turn supplied them to the Israeli Embassy, so that Israeli military efforts against southern Lebanon would not cause a politically sensitive situation for our delegation while we were there. Apparently, the Israeli Embassy in Washington had alerted certain pro-Israeli groups in the U.S., causing considerable pressure on the leaders of our seminar. . .

December 29: The Red Crescent Society

. . . We arrived at the Palestinian Red Crescent Society and immediately were ushered into a meeting with Dr. Arafat, Yasir Arafat's brother, and director of the Society. The director commented: "I am a humanitarian, and our Society is dedicated to humanitarian causes — education, health, honest labor. Our revolution is a humanitarian revolution, to return our people to their homeland."

Shortly after meeting Dr. Arafat, we were introduced to the semi-annual council meeting of the Red Crescent Society which was in progress. One medical doctor, seventy-years old, spoke of his fear when the bombs fell near the building where he was teaching, but his students were courageous and chided him for allowing his knees to shake. "Doctor, we are revolutionaries and we must be brave,

because our revolution is just." Then, he reported to us that he found a strange calm, and continued his teaching without fear.

We visited a nursery for children of women working at the Society. A child, blinded by a cluster bomb which had fallen on her refugee camp, was singing songs of the revolution. Since the PLO uses available buildings, the hospital was an apartment building, with wards made out of the various rooms in different apartments. Workers were making artificial limbs, shoes for amputated feet, and other aids for those wounded in air raids or shelling. We were told that this was the sixteenth year of the PLO revolution as well as the United Nations Year of the Handicapped, a poignant reminder as we met those handicapped by the war.

December 29: At the Refugee Camp

As we visited the refugee camp, founded by the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) in 1948, we were confronted with muddy roads, garbage strewn about, tiny tinny roofed homes, and hoards of children. More than 50,000 persons were living here, self-administered. Our guide, an economist, was born in a refugee camp in

Jaffa, and his wife and child continued to live in a refugee camp in southern Lebanon. He had gone to Iraq in 1979 to visit Palestinian friends and while there, his friends were arrested and executed and he was kept in prison for six months. Later he escaped and made his way across the Iraqi border without funds or passport. "I am a perpetual refugee. I have been imprisoned by the Israelis, where I was placed in solitary confinement for several months; I fought against Israel in the 1967 war; I was imprisoned by the Iraqis; we carry weapons not because we love revolution or fighting, but because we want to survive as free human beings, not as refugees."

December 31: The American Ambassador

In an off-the-record meeting with the American ambassador in Beirut, John Gunther Dean told us that he suspected that he would no longer be the ambassador to Lebanon after the new American administration was installed on January 20 because of his outspoken views on the situation in the Middle East. . . He commented at the irony of American officials being allowed to be in contact with African independence and revolutionary



Child victim of Israeli bombing cared for by Palestine Red Crescent nurse.

movements, with the Algerian Liberation movement, and with the Chinese when the U.S. had no official contacts, but that the current American administration had forbidden contact with the PLO and in fact had to fire its U.N. Ambassador, Andrew Young, for having made such contacts.

The Ambassador remarked that while PLO raids against the Israeli military targets typically reached the front pages of major American newspapers, a similar Israeli raid against civilian Palestinian refugee camps in Southern Lebanon merited only a small statement on page five or ten. . .

January 3: Shelling in Southern Lebanon

We were scheduled to spend the night with refugee families in southern Lebanon, but PLO intelligence had determined that there might be shelling by Israeli aircraft and Chairman Arafat had invited us for a meeting in the evening. Since this was considered a dangerous part of our itinerary, we had a half dozen guards carrying weapons with us on our bus. The American Embassy, the State Department, and the Israeli Embassy in Washington had been warned through neutral sources of our visit so that no strafing would occur while we were in southern Lebanon. Fifteen miles north of the Israeli border along the Mediterranean coast, two Syrian MIG-21's had been shot down by American-supplied Israeli Phantom jets on December 31, and the area had been strafed several times toward the end of 1980 by Israeli planes. Our guides were nervous about taking us into this area.

We visited a former refugee camp of 20,000 which was now a ghost town because of Israeli strafing. We were told to stay on the main path because it was possible that live shells were still in the fields. We were told that shelling would not destroy the village, but that air raids did, and when the area was evacuated, it was after 150 children caught in school had been killed in an air raid in 1974 without warning. Here and in other locations in southern Lebanon, we were shown fragments of American bombs with the markings in English, describing the potential impact and where they were manufactured. . .

January 3: Meeting Chairman Arafat

. . . The Chairman, well protected by several guards, was brought in and greeted each of the Americans individually. He spoke to us in good English and informed us that we were the 186th American delegation whom he had met personally. He was aware that we had been in the area that the Israelis had shelled and indicated his relief that we all were safe. However, he said that it was important for us to realize that only American bombs were being used to strafe southern Lebanon in an effort to clear an area to the Litani River to create another buffer zone for Israel.



Destruction in South Lebanon continues. . .

Chairman Arafat argued, "We have two revolutions: education and self-determination. Several years ago, your Brzezinski offered a slogan: 'Bye, Bye, PLO.' But we are still here, and we will not go away. The Palestinian revolution will live on, if not for our generation, then for the next. We will win."

January 5: The Children's Happiness School

We drove into the mountains south of Beirut to visit an orphanage. The Children's Happiness School, which housed the sons and daughters of those who had died in the revolution. The school was founded in 1957, expanded in 1965, and severely damaged in 1975 during the Lebanese Civil War. Another school nearby, housing 400 children, had been completely destroyed. . .

Some Observations

As we ended our visit to the PLO in Lebanon, some of our American faculty members were convinced of the PLO cause; others remained skeptical; others remained unconvinced. This was to be expected, various PLO members told us. The passion of all that we met, leaders, humanitarian workers, teenagers, children, and we met several hundred persons from various segments of Palestinian groups, was clear and intense. We were confident that this people fully expected their revolution to succeed and that the PLO was their chief spokesman. Personally, I believed that Brzezinski's 1977 statement "Bye, Bye, PLO" was premature, and that instead we could say with confidence: "Hello, PLO!"



And so does the work of the Revolution.

Repression in Academia: Palestinian Universities versus The Israeli Military

By Naseer H. Aruri

The following is excerpted from a February 1981 study based upon a recent visit to occupied Palestine by Dr. Aruri.

The Israeli authorities seem determined to nip in the bud any and all institutions which have the potential of contributing to state formation in the occupied territory. It is in this context that the present confrontation between the occupation regime and the Palestinian academic community must be seen. Schools and universities have been an easy and constant target of Israeli repression and harassment. From the very start, the authorities imposed new textbooks on the students and teachers causing the latter to declare a long general strike during the 1967-68 academic years.

The authorities resorted often to closing schools as a punishment for involvement in political activity on the part of students and faculty, while the army attacked schools, entering classrooms and sometimes injuring and killing students. A 16 year old student by the name of Nader Abu was chased and killed in the playground of a boys school in the town of Anabta, and the incident caused the authorities to close the school and declare a curfew in the town for several weeks. A Bethlehem University student, Tagrid Butmeh was shot and killed by the Israeli Border Guard in what was officially described as an accident in June 1980. On November 18, 1980 army troops on roof tops opened fire on demonstrating students wounding nine of them as unrest spread over the closing of Bir Zeit University by the military Governor.

High schools and universities are viewed generally by the authorities as "hotbeds of radicalism," "centers of violence" and "schools of terrorism". Israel's Deputy Attorney General summed up this prevailing attitude in a testimony before the Israeli High Court of Justice on July 14, 1980 thus: "Where there are schools, there will be demonstrations, stone-throwing, raising of flags, and therefore a threat to security". To "remedy" this situation the Israeli occupation regime placed crippling restrictions on institutions of higher learning on July 6, 1980. Military Order No. 854, in a particular extended to institutions of higher learning a series of regulations which



Class photo from an elementary school in Gaza.

credit: UNRWA

previously applied to elementary and secondary schools. It is the equivalent of Order No. 91 which brought the entire public school system in the West Bank under the direct authority and control of the military regime.

Military Order No. 854 which purports to "amend" Jordanian Law No. 16 for Education and Culture (1964) is in reality new legislation, in that it completely changes the concept of that law and goes beyond the intended scope of its application. Under Order No. 854 institutions of higher learning must obtain annual licenses, which can be revoked at any time by the military Governor. Moreover, the Governor is authorized to pass on the hiring and firing of individual faculty and administrators, the admission and expulsion of students, and the very nature of the academic curriculum, including the subjects taught and the books used. Any person who achieved the status of a security prisoner or was held for questioning is considered ineligible to serve on the faculty.

In announcing this rule, the military authorities claim that its objective is to protect the local residents from the inequities of substandard education. A spokesman for the military government explained it thus: "Everywhere else in the world there are laws for high schools and universities. Only in the West Bank was there no law for the Universities. We decided the Arab Universities must stand up to the criteria as universities elsewhere."

Permits for faculty have been reduced from one year, then three months, to one month and now to only 15 days. These restrictions clearly disrupt the educational process and reduce the quality of education. Instructors can hardly plan their courses or even count assuredly on being present to conduct their classes. Nor could the institutes of higher learning engage in even short-term planning since faculty work permits could be revoked at the whims of army officers without explanation or a proper notice.

The universities, at present, are being blackmailed by the authorities, as a

considerable number of non-resident faculty members (both Palestinian and foreign) have their work and residence permits withheld, pending university compliance with Order No. 854. Our delegation was told last November by a Bir Zeit University official that 40 faculty members had no permission to work, 20 of whom are Palestinian. He added: "Last week, I asked the military Governor about the work permits for these 40 teachers. He said they are here on my desk, but I won't give them to you".

Order No. 854 has also affected the Nursing and Social Work programs at Bethlehem. Students who are required to do practical training at the Hussein Hospital in nearby Beit Jala, were actually made to stop by the military authorities in October 1980 since they had no permits. In the meantime request for such permits has been pending since April 1980, our delegation was informed last November.

The universities are also required to provide the military authorities with detailed information about the academic calendar, the names of local and foreign instructors, as well as the names of students. The inquest does not end at this point; it extends to other items including the full name, the date of license, citizenship and passport number, field of specialization, and place of residence at present. They also request a breakdown on the composition of the student body with respect to geographic origin, i.e., the West Bank, Gaza Strip, 1948, Israel or foreign countries. Gaza and Jerusalem students must obtain special permits to attend West Bank universities. In addition to its surveillance utility, the data and the manner in which it is structured is

designed to promote the purpose of fragmenting and segmenting Palestinian society and keeping it on the defensive.

Strict control is also exercised by the military authorities over the acquisition policies of educational materials such as books, journals and laboratory equipment. All books entering the country are subject to censorship. Books on nuclear physics as well as science equipment such as discs with even less radio-activity than a television set are strictly prohibited. Bethlehem President told us, "you have to prepare three years ahead for equipment and books. . . we bring them across the bridge [Allenby Bridge] and give them to the censor who will go through them book by book. It takes several months to determine what goes and what does not". At Bir Zeit, we were told about a list of 1187 books which had been banned since 1977. They deal with a wide-range of subjects from Palestinian folklore to Islamic thought, including such books as *The Islamic Dictionary*, *Arab Society* and *the Palestine Question*, *With Kamal Jumblatt*, *The Arab Awakening*. . . etc.

With regard to laboratory equipment, the authorities do not only scrutinize for military potential, but they also levy taxes sometimes 100% of their value and custom duties on approved equipment as well as on building material and office machines. Bir Zeit University, the only institution of higher learning which predated the occupation, was granted exemption from custom duties and taxes by the Jordanian government. Israel refused an application for exemption by the University in 1970 even though Israeli educational institutions are rebated for custom duties or taxes that they incur.

The fact is that the military authorities use violence pre-emptively and routinely to intimidate both students and faculty in conformity with the Begin government's "iron fist" policy for dealing with political dissent. These repressive measures have, what they were intended to achieve. That what they were intended to achieve. That sector of the Palestinian people which, for fourteen years has had to endure living in a colonial settler framework, is not less determined today than it was in 1967 to resist the repressive atmosphere of the military.

The educational process however is threatened by the constant surveillance of the military authorities, the nagging questions, the daily calls, the beating of students and faculty, the firing of tear gas canisters even in classrooms, and the live bullets, not the rubber ones which are intended for the consumption of Western public opinion. It is further strained by the persistent anxiety of faculty over visas, work permits and their basic livelihood; and it is eroded as the entire staff is preoccupied with searching for detained students and haggling with arrogant officers over the terms of releasing the luckier ones, or having to spend their time generating ideas to counteract future restrictions. The educational process is indeed consumed as politics permeates students activities and overshadows the curriculum. Students are torn between their responsibilities to their teachers, to their parents, and to their nation and history. To all of these sectors in the Palestinian academic community, Order No. 854 is but another one of those intolerable acts designed to pre-empt and obfuscate a Nation-State in formation.



Ramallah school girls build a roadblock.

Palestine National Council



The Palestine National Council, the 260-member Palestinian Parliament in exile, held its fifteenth session in Damascus, Syria, April 11-19. The ten days of extensive discussions were characterized by open and critical exchanges of views on major issues and the policies of the leadership in the past two years.

The Palestine National Council (PNC) focused on critical political, economic and military issues confronting the Palestinian people. High on the agenda was the need for achieving and strengthening Palestinian national unity. Most delegates stressed that the Palestinian organizations must move toward political and military unity in order to face the challenges and plots by imperialism and Zionism. There is no more time for maneuvers and divisions; Palestinian organizations must unite behind their collective leadership.

Thus the PNC elected a new Executive Committee representing all major Palestinian organizations and trends, and formed a higher military command from all Palestinian organizations to implement unity.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) rejoined the Executive Committee for the first time since 1974. The new Executive Committee consists of three representatives of Fateh, including Arafat as Chairman, seven independents, and one representative each from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Popular Front General Command, Sa'iq and the Arab Liberation Front.

On the second day of the PNC, the head of the Political Department presented a 90-page report on the political situation of the Palestinian revolution. Farouk Qaddoumi's report dealt with the impasse in the PLO-Jordanian dialogue, the lack of sufficient progress in the "European initiative," and with other issues vital to the Palestinian revolution. The third day of the PNC was devoted to debate on this political report and discussion of the financial report submitted by Dr. Walid Qamhawi, head of the Palestine National Fund.

The Council praised the socialist countries and the Soviet Union for giving political and military aid to the PLO, and called for strengthened ties with the Soviet Union, an ally of the Palestinian people. Delegates also praised the Soviet Union's initiative to solve the Palestinian problem on the basis of regaining Palestinian rights to self-determination and statehood.

The PNC debated the question of cooperation and dialogue with Jewish and Israeli anti-Zionist organizations and groups. Council resolutions stressed that the PLO will continue to cooperate with all the democratic progressive Jewish organizations within and outside Israel that oppose Zionism and support the PLO and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, independence and return to their homeland. The Council rejected discussions with Zionist organizations, as harmful to the goals of the Palestinian struggle.

The PNC resolutions stressed the need for implementing national unity within the structure and institutions of the PLO, called

for collective leadership and the participation of all organizations in decision-making, and emphasized that all qualified and trained Palestinians must participate in the work and institutions of the PLO.

The Council also gave special attention to relations with the Arab peoples and their nationalist and progressive movements. The PNC resolved to seek closer cooperation between the PLO and these movements, especially in Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt, in response to threats from the United States and Israel. The special close relationship between the PLO and Syria was particularly emphasized. Both are facing American-supported Israeli attacks, and both must coordinate their policies to the fullest to be able to survive in Lebanon.

In his speech, Syrian President Assad condemned the "imperialist, Zionist plot" which led to the crisis in Lebanon. "These plots are causing explosions within Lebanon for the aim of fragmenting it and of using its territory to strike against Syria and the Arab nation," Assad explained.

The PNC's resolutions emphasized the need to assist the Lebanese National Movement and provide its organizations with the means to withstand the Israeli-Phalangist attacks. The PNC emphasized the need to cooperate closely with the Jordanian national movement and to defeat the Hashemite regime's attempts at moving toward a settlement at the expense of the Palestinians and the PLO.

The PNC prominently noted the Egyptian National Front and all its opposition parties



Mayors Fahed Kawasmeh and Mohamed Milhem and Sheikh Tamimi at the PNC.

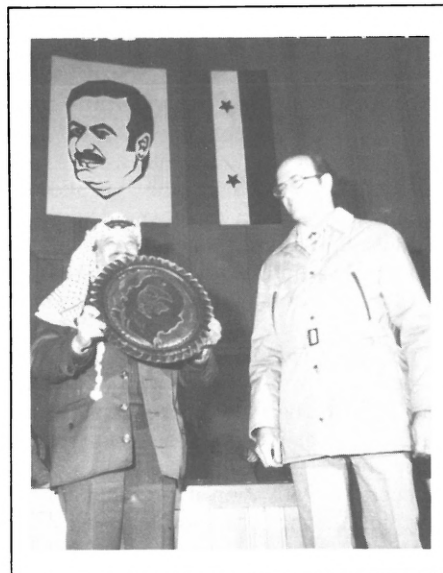
and groups that oppose Sadat's policies and challenge his ability to bring real peace, prosperity and democracy to the Egyptian people. The Council called on all Arab States opposed to Camp David and Sadat's policies to strengthen the Steadfastness Front and implement their decisions to boycott Sadat's government and isolate it in the Arab arena. Some delegates warned the oil-rich Arab states to implement the boycott of Sadat and to use the oil weapon against the U.S. before it is too late, because the Palestinian people will not remain silent in the face of Arab inaction.

The Palestine National Council was attended by delegates from all over the world. Representatives from the Soviet Union, ten socialist countries, Africa, Asia and Latin America addressed the Council and brought greetings to the PLO and its leadership from heads of states. Liberation movements in Africa, Latin America and Asia were represented, and the Salvadorean, Namibian and other liberation movements spoke in salute to the Palestinian struggle. The Vietnamese delegates presented a special gift, a vase made of a B-52 bomber shot down over Vietnam. The Cuban delegation presented a plate bearing Che Guevara's picture.

Some of the most moving speeches at the Council were given by the Lebanese leader Walid Jumblatt and Egyptian nationalist Lutfi al-Kholi. Jumblatt called for closer unity between the Palestinian and Lebanese people at this critical stage of the struggle, and al-Kholi emphasized that the Egyptian people are struggling not only for Palestine, but for Egypt and its national dignity, independence and progress.

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasser Arafat delivered a major three-hour speech on the fourth day of the PNC. Arafat spoke about constructive criticism in the Palestinian movement, the Soviet Union's new Middle East proposal and the French initiative to internationalize the Lebanon crisis.

In response to the recent fighting in Zahle, Lebanon, the French government sought to have an international force replace the Syrian peacekeeping units, implying they were the cause of the fighting. Most Lebanese saw this move, supported by the U.S., as part of the Reagan administration's campaign to discredit Syria because of its good relations with the Soviet Union.



Chairman Arafat and the leader of the Cuba Delegation at the PNC.

"The days of French imperialism have gone, and only the peoples of the region can determine their destiny. No one can impose an initiative on Lebanon" declared Arafat. "Why did [the French] not move when Israel shelled the Christian villages in South Lebanon? . . . Why did they not reject Israeli occupation of Christian Marjayoun? Was it because they support the plan for a pincer operation against us?" demanded Arafat.

In contrast, the PLO Chairman praised Soviet President Brezhnev's initiative as "a just solution to the Middle East conflict." U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim has supported Brezhnev's call for an international conference of all parties involved in the Middle East conflict, including the PLO.

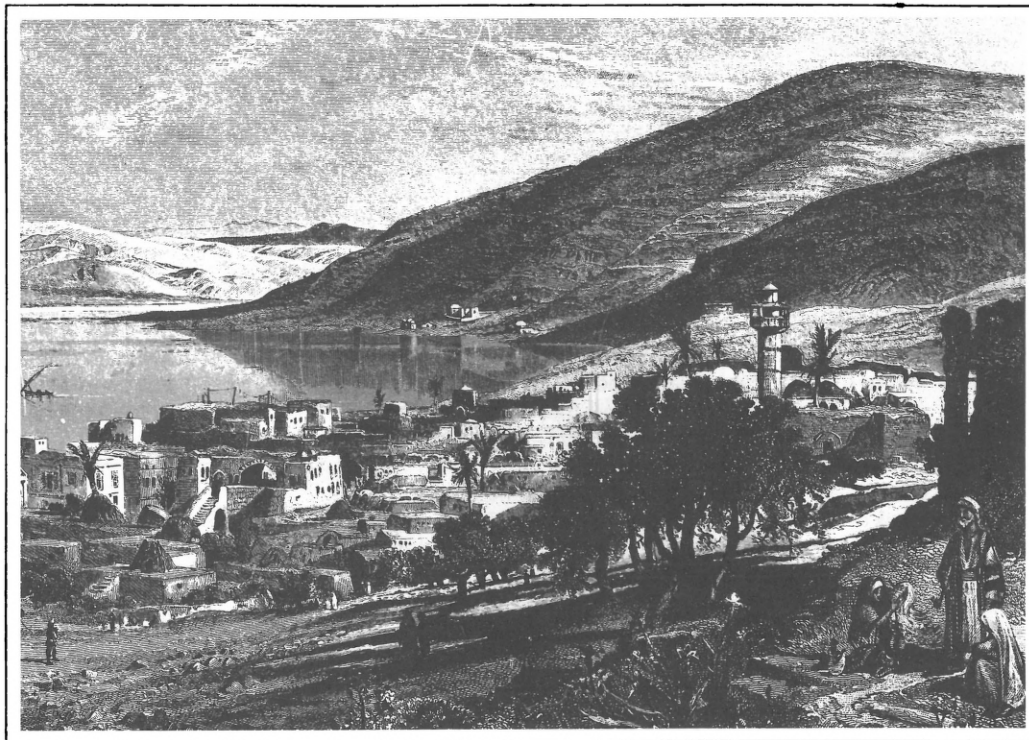
Chairman Arafat criticized Western Europe for its inaction in this field and said that the Soviet Union has provided a framework for a solution, while Western Europe still hesitates and vacillates. He warned Western Europe, and especially France, against trying to revive the Camp David accords and against attempting to intervene in Lebanon to re-establish French domination. He also criticized the U.S. government, accusing it of "terrorism" and supporting Israeli aggression and genocide against the Palestinian and Lebanese people.

Arafat described the Arab situation as "bad," and repeated what he told the Arab leaders at the recent Islamic summit in Saudi Arabia: "I want your swords and not your words." The PLO Chairman criticized those Arab governments which promise the U.S. bases and use of military facilities in their countries.

Arafat warned that the Arab people will not sit passively and watch as the U.S. builds its military forces and bases in the area. Palestinian leader Abu Iyad also warned that the Palestinian and Arab people will strike at American interests in the area if the U.S. government continues its warlike measures in the Middle East.

PLO Chairman Arafat's speech at the Council was comprehensive and strong. He emphasized that at this difficult time, the Palestinians are determined to face all challenges and to make whatever sacrifices necessary to protect their revolution and to achieve their full inalienable rights to self-determination, independence and return to their homeland. He stressed the strength of the Palestinian revolution: In the last two years it has defeated massive Israeli air, ground and sea attacks supported by American technology. Arafat also stressed that the Palestinian revolution has put the Palestinian people back on the political map and that inevitably the Palestinians will move to the geographic map and establish the Palestinian independent state, with Jerusalem as its capital.

Land Day 1981



Tiberias, Palestine, 1880.

I Am the Son of the Land

You may take my hands
and lock them in your chains.
You may also blindfold me.

You deprived me
of the light
and I marched.
You robbed me
of bread
and I ate.
You plundered the land
from me
and I ploughed.

I am the son of the land
and for that
I find goodness in this earth
wherever I am:
The ants of this land
foster me
The eagles of this land
will shield my open revolt.

Yes
You may take my hands
And lock them in your chains
You may also blindfold me
But here I will stand tall
And here I shall remain
to the end.

— Fawzi el-Asmar

Galilee/Triangle, Occupied Palestine, March 30, 1976: Israeli troops killed six Palestinians during a day of protest against land confiscations.

For the past five years, the residents of the Galilee and the Triangle have observed March 30 as *Yom al-Ard*, the Day of the Land. But these annual events are not simply commemorative, for the confiscation of Palestinian land by the Israeli state is continuing.

This year's events included rallies and strikes in the West Bank and Naqab, as well as the Galilee and Triangle. In Nazareth, 3,000 gathered to hear Shehadeh Shehadeh, Chairman of the National Committee for Defense of the Land (NCDL), Mayor Tawfiq Zayyad, lawyer Mohammed Mi'ari, Knesset Member Meir Vilner, representatives of the Ibna' Al-Balad and Druse movements, as well as other distinguished Palestinians. According to *al-Fajr* newspaper in Jerusalem, Israeli police attacked a delegation from Haifa, arresting four persons.

In the Triangle region, 3,000 demonstrators in Taibeh carried slogans

condemning Zionist colonization policies and supporting the PLO. At the concluding rally, speeches were given by representatives of Ibna' al-Balad, An nahdah and the National Progressive movements. In a public meeting in Umm el-Fahm on March 28, the Ibna' al-Balad movement proposed the establishment of a fund to support peasants and to develop agriculture collectives, and that voluntary work camps be held on land threatened with confiscation. The meeting also agreed that the National Committee for Defense of the Land consider Land Day a national holiday. Representatives of Rakah and the local council also addressed the meeting.

In Beer Sheba, a March 29 gathering focussed on the Israeli policy of confiscation of Beduin land. Saliba Khamis, general secretary of the NCDL, addressed the meeting of members of the Beer Sheba Arab Student Committee and representatives of the Beduin community.

In the West Bank, *al-Fajr* reported that commemorative demonstrations were dispersed by the military authorities. In most towns, many shopkeepers observed a general strike; in Jerusalem the strike was total. On March 29, the Professional Unions Federation hosted a gathering in the Jerusalem suburb of Beit Hanina. Representatives of the National Guidance Committee, the regional NCDL and victims of Israeli land confiscation addressed the rally.

Bir Zeit University students commemorated Land Day by organizing a work committee at Nabi Saleh village. Much of Nabi Saleh's land is earmarked for confiscation of a new Israeli colony, Nevi Tsuf. According to *al-Fajr*, Israeli military occupation forces arrived at Nabi Saleh and demanded that the 130 Bir Zeit students leave, but the students held their ground, and eventually the soldiers left.

Ziad Abu Ein — Update

The Chicago Court of Appeals has refused to review its decision to extradite Ziad Abu Ein to Israel. Ziad's lawyers have therefore decided to appeal to the Supreme Court. They have thirty days to present the case but there is no assurance that the Supreme Court will accept to hear Ziad's appeal.

On Wednesday, April 15, Ziad began a hunger strike to protest the decision and also to protest his incarceration in solitary confinement for refusing to do prison work and to wear the prison uniform. Ziad has consistently maintained that a political prisoner will not do prison work or wear the uniform.

In related events, the Arab League Foreign Affairs Ministers in Tunis have sent a joint statement to Secretary of State Haig protesting the case against Ziad and requesting that it be dismissed and that Ziad go free.

Letters, telegrams and phone calls to Secretary of State Haig protesting the case against Ziad and calling for his freedom are necessary now more than ever. The final decision on Ziad's extradition to Israel rests with General Haig.

UN Secretary General Dr. Kurt Waldheim states support for Palestinian national rights

In an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper *Ar'Ra'y al-Ahram* Dr. Kurt Waldheim gave the following statement as to his priorities for a comprehensive and just settlement to the Middle East conflict:

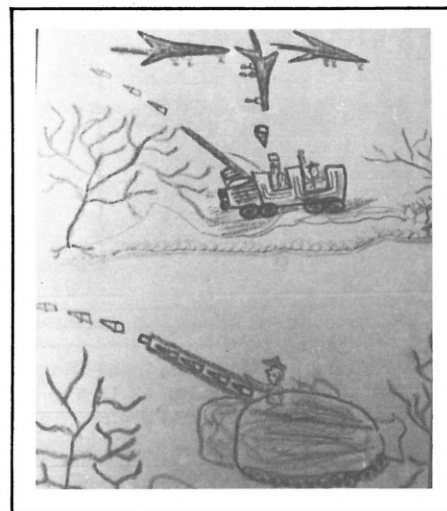
"These requirements include the provisions of UN Resolution 242, despite my belief that this resolution is no longer suitable because it deals with the Palestinian issue as a humanitarian and not as a political problem. Therefore, I believe that the time has come for dealing with the Palestinian issue in a positive manner. We must be fully aware that the Palestinian issue is the crux of the Middle East conflict and therefore, any peaceful settlement to the Middle East problem must be based on it. The Palestinian issue must be dealt with on the basis of recognizing the Palestinian people's legitimate national rights and, at the same time, recognizing the right of all the area's states to live in peace and within secure borders. Before anything else, Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories must be achieved. The solution to the Palestinian problem must also include a just solution to the Jerusalem issue."

In the same interview, the UN Secretary General stated his support for the Soviet Union's proposal for an international conference on the Middle East in which the United States, Europe and all parties concerned with the conflict, including the PLO, would participate.

Israel Admits Supplying Lebanese Christians with Arms

In a press conference April 14, an unnamed Israeli military official admitted that the Israeli government has been supplying the isolationist forces in Zahle with military equipment, as well as maintaining the flow of arms and ammunition to Major Saad Haddad.

During an earlier special meeting April 7, Prime Minister Begin told the Knesset's Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee that "Israel has all along been helping the Christian centers, at their explicit request." He further stated that he had made this policy clear to General Haig.



A Palestinian child's drawing.

Deir Yassin

On April 9, 1948 the Irgun terrorist troops, under the leadership of Menahem Begin entered the Palestinian village of Deir Yassin and ruthlessly murdered 254 men, women and children.

After 1948, the Israeli government turned Deir Yassin into a mental institution and the homes of the murdered or expelled Palestinians are now inhabited by the patients. Menahem Begin, in an interview on the ABC-TV program *20/20* dismissed Deir Yassin or similar Zionist horrors by saying:

"In a war sometimes something happens, but then we deeply regret it and say so openly."

The West, which is so ready to condemn the Palestinians for their efforts to liberate their homeland, seems to have joined Begin in forgetting the massacre of Deir Yassin.

The Palestinians have not forgotten — commemorative events occur yearly: under occupation, in Beirut and in many other cities where Palestinians are living in exile. Last year, when Palestinian students at Tيره UNWRA's Men's Institute held a rally to commemorate Deir Yassin, over 200 Israeli soldiers entered the grounds, beat, knifed, tear-gassed and arrested the assembled students. Over twenty students and staff had to be treated at the hospital.

Furthermore, as *Al-Fajr* brings forth, Deir Yassin was in no way an isolated incident. What Deir Yassin represents to the 1948 war, Beit Nuba, Imwas and Yalu symbolize in the war of 1967. The villagers of these West Bank villages raised white flags of surrender, but nonetheless, the Israeli troops shot many of the residents and evacuated the rest. After 1967 "Canada Park" was superimposed on the site of Imwas, and the lands of Yalu and Beit Nuba are now farmed by neighboring Israeli settlements.

The sign for the bus stop at Deir Yassin says Kiryat Shaul, the name of the Israeli settlement. But for all Palestinians it is Deir Yassin, a symbol of what the Zionist occupation of Palestine has meant to the Palestinians.

National Coordinating Committee Outlawed in Galilee

April 16 the Israeli government banned all meetings of the National Coordinating Committee, an umbrella organization of Palestinian leaders inside the '48 borders. *The New York Times* reported that Prime Minister Begin, in his capacity as Defense Minister, banned the organization "because of the danger to Israel's security posed by the existence and activity of this group."

The National Coordinating Committee openly supports the P.L.O. It was established in February and is composed of leaders from several organizations.

AAUG Calls for Immediate Resignation of NSC Advisor Richard Allen

"The 'off-the-cuff' remarks of National Security Council Advisor Richard V. Allen, made on ABC-TV's 20/20 program April 2, 1981, displayed a dangerous and irresponsible attitude towards the Middle East crisis, flew in the face of established U.S. policy, and seriously endangered the possibilities of peace in the Middle East," declared AAUG President Khalil Nakhleh. "For these reasons, the Association of Arab-American University Graduates calls for the immediate resignation of Allen from his position of responsibility with the Reagan Administration." Nakhleh and nine other Arab-American community leaders have sent a letter demanding Allen's resignation to the White House.

Allen characterized the Palestine Liberation Organization as a "terrorist organization" and said there was "ample justification" for Israel's internationally-condemned policy of pre-emptive strikes into South Lebanon, on the grounds, Allen said, of "hot pursuit."

Allen made the comments in an interview with reporter Geraldo Rivera during his special program on the Arab-Israel conflict: "The Unholy War." The program itself surpassed all previous efforts by the media in presenting a biased, sensationalized and distorted view of the Palestinian people's struggle for liberation.

Given this, the AAUG has further joined other Arab-American and human rights organizations, including the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee and the Palestine Congress of North America in demanding equal time under the FCC's Fairness Doctrine "to respond to the distortions, misinformation and biased perspective of the ABC special."

Lebanese Nationalist Movement and PLO Statement on Lebanese Crisis

The joint leadership of the Lebanese Nationalist Movement and the Palestinian revolution issued a statement at the end of a meeting on April 7. They affirmed their belief "that the Zionist presumptuous military escalation in the south was and still is the cause of the internal strife in Lebanon. The eruption caused by the isolationists in Zahle and Beirut is an Israeli effort aimed at striking at the Lebanese nationalist existence, liquidating the Palestinian revolution and undermining Syria's steadfastness."

The statement also said that the Phalangists' fight to control Zahle is aimed both at "expanding the isolationist ghetto and at ensuring contact between the Phalangist canton in Lebanon and Saad Haddad's territory in the South and thereby with Israel." The joint leadership further condemned the U.S. position regarding the crisis in Lebanon and their silence regarding Israel's continued shelling and attacks against the civilian populations of South Lebanon, both Palestinian and Lebanese.

Campaigns to Attract Settlers Intensify in Israel

The *Jerusalem Post International*, April 12-18, reports stepped-up campaigns to attract recent immigrants up to the age of 35 for settlement in the Galilee, the Negev and the West Bank. They are offered loans for housing and shares in enterprises in the settlements and also financed training programs for settlers entering new professions.

In the Golan, the government has decided to double its settlement drive. Prime Minister Begin and the Finance and Housing ministers have decided to build another 200 houses, over and above the planned 158 to perpetuate the occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights.

More Land Seizures

The Zionist authorities' massive pre-election colonization drive, which has resulted in almost 20,000 acres of Palestinian land in the West Bank being seized in the last four months, continued with decisions to establish two more settlements (one on Radar Hill in Jerusalem, the other — Beit Area B — near Jericho) and to expropriate some 800 acres of land near Qalqilya. The owners of the land have sought a High Court injunction against the Qalqilya seizures.

Land seizures continued with some 900 acres of land being expropriated in the village of Al-Khodr near Bethlehem. Also, in the Hebron district, villagers from Sa'ir and Shuyukh confronted bulldozers paving the way for the establishment of a new settlement on land belonging to the two villages. A similar confrontation took place between Kfar Laqf villages near Nablus and the occupation authorities who were attempting to work on confiscated land. One Palestinian was wounded by a gun-toting Israeli.

Economic Bonanza for Israel

The *Jerusalem Post* of April 7 reported that, although there were no formal commitments, the Israelis received the strong impression from General Haig that the Reagan administration will facilitate the marketing of Israeli products — including military items — in the U.S. Further, the U.S. will consider the deployment of some tactical reserve equipment on Israeli soil, and will consider increasing its forces' use of Israeli facilities for servicing and supply, all to Israel's economic benefit.

The Jerusalem Domestic Service (JDS) reported April 6 that economic circles estimate, after Haig's visit, that Israel will be able to double its defense exports within 5 years, as the U.S. Army is likely to purchase various services and products from Israel.

Also according to JDS, the U.S. is viewing positively Israeli export deals which involve U.S.-made components, such as the Kfir jet fighter plane which could be marketed to various third world countries.



Sign for Kiryat Arba settlement in Hebron.

credit: L. Barbee



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